

a first dielectric protective film over the substrate;  
an interface film over the first protective film;  
at least one recording film over the interface film, the  
recording film undergoing change in atomic arrangement upon  
irradiation with recording beams; and  
a second dielectric protective film over and in contact  
with the recording film, wherein

*at  
could  
gr B R*  
the second protective film contains a sulfide and the nitrogen  
content in the second protective film is not more than 25 at.%, the  
recording film contains Ge-Sb-Te based material and 0.1-10 at.% of  
at least one element selected from the group consisting of Si, P,  
V, Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Nb, Mo, Ru, Rh, Pd, Ag, Cd, Sn, Ta, Os,  
Ir, Pt, Au, Tl, Pb, Bi and Cr, the element bonds to sulfur to  
produce sulfide or produces a barrier layer inhibiting diffusion of  
sulfur,

nitrogen contents on both sides of an interface at which the  
recording film and the second protective film contact with each  
other is such that the nitrogen content of the protective film side  
is greater than that of the recording film side and the changing  
amount of the nitrogen content in the direction of thickness of the  
film with the interface between the films as a boundary is 1-50  
at.%/nm, and the recording film is not in contact with the first  
protective film.

*SAB  
P  
CZ*

7. (Twice Amended) The information recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the second protective film contains zinc sulfide.

*SAB  
P  
CZ*

8. (Twice Amended) The information recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the second protective film contains a mixture of zinc sulfide and silicon dioxide.

*SAB  
P  
CZ*

10. (Amended) The information recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the protective films comprise ZnS-SiO<sub>2</sub>.

*SAB  
P  
CZ*

11. (Amended) The information recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the protective films comprise (ZnS)<sub>80</sub>(SiO<sub>2</sub>)<sub>20</sub>.

*SAB  
P  
CZ*

14. (Amended) The information recording medium according to claim 1, which further comprises:

a first reflective layer over the second protective film; and  
a second reflective layer over the first reflective layer.

*SAB  
P  
CZ*

17. (Amended) The information recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the first protective film is thicker than the second protective film.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the application by this Amendment.